It gives us great pleasure to introduce the Gettysburg College Art and Art History senior Capstone projects for 2013. These projects serve as the culmination of the Studio Art and Art History majors. They are as rich and varied as the students themselves and exemplify the commitment the Department of Art and Art History places on creativity and scholarship in a liberal arts education.

The Art History research projects show remarkable breadth and individual personality, inspired by students’ own experiences and interests from study abroad, internships or previous classes. There is a truly global range here—from the tensions of scholar-artists under the occupation of Genghis Khan in Yuan Dynasty China to the religious and nationalistic landscapes of 19th-century America to the bold contemporary work of Indian artist Subodh Gupta. The scholarly questions and foci span from the high to the low. Students investigate humor and the grotesque in the Northern Renaissance works of Pieter Bruegel; the dynamic and contradictory ways the ancient world was reimagined in the work of Jean-Léon Gérôme and the pure opulence of the Paris Opera House. Thanks to funding from the Provost Office and the Dr. B. Katharine Stroup Brooks Fund, some received grants to study their works firsthand, supporting trips to New York and Paris.

The work shown by our Studio Art majors in the Senior Exhibition has also been informed by the wide variety of experiences they have had both at Gettysburg College and beyond. Their eclectic interests and diverse backgrounds have made for lively critiques! The combination of many hours spent in their own studio spaces, and countless additional hours viewing other artists’ works through visits to museums, galleries, sculpture parks and other venues, has supported the creative energy of these students. In addition, each student has had group and individual critiques with their Gettysburg faculty members, as well as with visiting artists and critics brought to campus especially for these important interactions. All of these elements helped to shape their personal artistic message and will continue to shape our understanding of contemporary art. The creative voice they have developed here will serve them well in the future.

The Department of Art and Art History and the entire Gettysburg College community should be proud of the quality and engagement that we see in the work of these fine graduating seniors. Now more than ever, a dedication to one’s passion and an ability to rise to new challenges are the best investments for the future. Please join us in celebrating the successful capstone projects at the upcoming Art History Symposium presentations and Studio Art Exhibition. We hope you will enjoy learning about our students’ great work and will wish them well in their future endeavors!

Mark K. Warwick  
Chairperson/Associate Professor, Art and Art History

Felicia Else  
Associate Professor, Art and Art History
Art Senior Projects

Chelsea A. Anspach
Alisa M. Luongo
Alexandra V. McComas
Rachel M. Vockroth

Art Majors Senior Exhibition

May 1 – 19, 2013 • Schmucker Art Gallery
Reception: May 1, 5 – 7 p.m. • Gallery Talks: May 2, noon

Senior studio art majors present their capstone projects in a variety of media.

www.gettysburg.edu/art
My life is made up of relationships; my relationships with other people and the relationship I have with myself. My watercolor portraits are never quite in the realm of reality and are made up of bright intense colors. I paint portraits because there is nothing more fascinating or frustrating than other people. Mixing paint with other materials allows me to make my images come alive in a more three-dimensional way, which paint alone cannot provide. In some of these portraits I paint without paint - I use yarn, which gives the illusion of paint, but has a quality all its own. I hope that viewers will find my work both whimsical and jovial.

Chelsea A. Anspach

Nose, Yarn on canvas, 72” x 72”, Spring 2013
My art is the compilation of all of my ideas and viewpoints on life in the present. I like to build up my pieces with different materials, colors and textures to engage the viewer in many directions at once. I strive to create pieces that enable people to look at a familiar object or idea in a completely new and different light. The complexity of life, human nature, and the passage of time inspire me to create art that can mean a different thing to everyone who experiences it. I want my art to compel people to awaken from the monotony of day-to-day and to be refreshed by new concepts, new viewpoints, and unexpected treatments of familiar objects.

Alisa M. Luongo
Every area of study works towards a central goal: communication. Art is simply one language of communication, and every medium its tools. For this reason, I would like to create art that plainly demonstrates my intent, be it political, playful, or practical. The medium which best suits the goal should be utilized, even if that means mixing the techniques in a new and strange way. I don’t want art to be a mystery, but instead be approachable and clear to anybody who sees it.

Alexandra V. McComas

Lines, Oil on masonite, 7”x7”; February 2013
As an artist, the natural beauty of all things influences me. In my oil paintings, I focus on the raw elegance of roses and combine opposites, geometric and organic, to create artwork that is bold and energetic. My strong interest in interior design is also shown through my matching of patterned textiles and color. My goal is to create paintings that exhibit freshness, charm, and sensuality.

Rachel Vockroth

Rachel Vockroth

The Earth Laughs in Flowers, Oil and Fabric on Canvas, 30” x 30”, 2013
Art History Symposium Senior Thesis Presentations

Thursday, April 25 • 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. • Science Center 200

Please join the Art and Art History Department for a stimulating and engaging series of 15-minute research presentations with images by the Art History seniors. Refreshments will be served.

www.gettysburg.edu/art
Subodh Gupta, a contemporary Indian artist, has created a distinct collection of works focusing on the effects of urbanization and globalization in the rural communities of North India. With “home” as the central focal point, he gives life to issues that have affected India since colonial times, while also conceptually linking pop art with Indian visual culture. As India adjusts to a new era dominated by a global economy, new technologies and the facility of mass transit, the nature of home and family life continues to change.

Whether his materials are milk pails, washing buckets, tiffin boxes, chapatti tongs or daal strainers, these durable items are familiar to all stratum of Indian society as an ever-present part of many Indian homes. To Gupta, these pristine, gleaming mass-markey commodities symbolize India’s struggle for equilibrium between the dichotomies of urban/rural; wealth/poverty; asceticism/consumerism and low caste/high caste.

Gupta’s post-modernist ideas channel far-ranging influences and connections to artists like Jeff Koons. He represents a generation of young artists whose commentary tells of a country on the move, fueled by this economic growth and a materialistic mindset. He succeeds in finding an art language that references India and can also be appreciated throughout the world, solving the paradox of how to be both modern and Indian.

By analyzing a series of works, I will reveal the meaning, interpretation and aesthetic behind the works, give a comparison to other, perhaps more controversial contemporary artists, and debate Subodh Gupta’s seemingly good intentions for India.
The great landscapes of the American West depicted during the nineteenth century ignited the American imagination. Artists such as Thomas Moran and Albert Bierstadt created images that captured the majesty and grandeur of a Divine Creator, as well as the reality of history and beauty in nature that would soon characterize the nation as a whole. The unsteady political and social climate of the 19th century proved America’s need to reestablish and redefine its strength, power, and triumph as a nation. There was also need to overcome the inferiority complex that was growing in the shadows of the country’s European forefathers. The incredible mountains, rushing rivers, waterfalls, and vast landscapes of the West quickly became symbols that would define the nation in all of its glory. The incomparable beauty and maturity of these lands as depicted in Bierstadt and Moran’s Romantic Sublime paintings proved to many the transformative power of nature and the overwhelming grandeur of the ground that Americans could call their own. Through the combination of extraordinary detail, larger than life scale, and dramatic contrasts of light and dark, these painters were able to insinuate the same feeling to audiences that they experienced when first encountering these rare and magnificent sites. As artists, scientists, and writers explored the Western territories they entered into sanctuaries of God and returned with much to show for their journeys. The information offered to the American public by these romantic artists and thinkers projected visions of the West that would soon exemplify all that America stands for. The paintings of Bierstadt and Moran were pivotal in shifting the current of America’s religious and national identity and defining the nation, like the powerful mountains of the West, as one that would stand the test of time.
From Anacreon to the Colosseum:
The Evolution of Gerome

Nineteenth century France saw the progression of art from the Academics to the Impressionists, the Neo-Classicists to the Romantics. In the middle of this whirlwind of development, Jean-Leon Gerome emerged as one of the foremost artists of mid-nineteenth century Paris. Like many artists, Gerome experimented with various styles and subject matter over his long career. He began his career in a small apartment on the rue de Fleurus, amid a community of young artists inspired by the antique and dedicated to portraying a new, witty view of the historical genre scene. These Neo-Grecs as they were called, were inspired by excavations at the ancient Roman towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum and sought to portray the day-to-day experience of the classical civilizations, in contrast to the noble themes that were the standard of the day. Despite this passion for the trivial in his early years, Gerome dedicates the later part of his career to monumental scenes, replacing wit and charm with archaeological precision and theatrical grandeur. He paints famous scenes of the Colosseum and the Circus Maximus in complete contrast to the charm and obscurity of his earlier work. Through this thesis, I seek to explore the motives behind this radical change in Gerome’s style. I will begin by exploring the development of his work, paying particular attention to the visual features present in each of his two major movements as well as the potential underlying motivation for the choices made by the artist. It will set Gerome against the backdrop of the eclecticism of art in the nineteenth century and explore how his choices produced two distinctive styles in their own right, and yet still highlighted the true distinction of Jean-Leon Gerome amongst artists of the nineteenth century.

Allyson E. Hitte

Jean-Leon Gerome, Une Idylle: Daphnis et Chloe
In 1279, Genghis Khan led the Mongols on a fierce campaign throughout China, consequently toppling the Song Dynasty and establishing the Yuan. Genghis Khan's brutal rule as both Mongol Khan and Chinese Emperor served as the impetus for the rise of intellectual painters who had previously held positions in the Song Dynasty court. Confucian precepts of political loyalty prohibited the service of two dynasties, therefore, those who had held office under the Song were obliged to withdraw from public service. This encouraged the proliferation of the yimin, or “leftover subjects,” to turn to art in order to express their enduring loyalty to the Song and their opposition to Mongol rule. Zhao Mengfu, a descendant of the founder of the Song royal house, was and is considered one of the leading artists of the wen ren, or “scholarly style,” paintings. Upon accepting an invitation from Genghis Khan to work for the Yuan government, Zhao faced castigation as a traitor for his betrayal to the Song Dynasty. However, despite his considerable success under Mongol court, Zhao remained detached from political participation, maintaining chaoyin, or “reclusion at court.” He identified with the scholar-officials of the Northern Song and many of his paintings reveal his dissatisfaction with his life and career under the Yuan. This paper will accordingly examine Zhao Mengfu’s paintings in comparison to both Yuan Dynasty court paintings and Song loyalist paintings to reveal that despite his employment under the Mongols, Zhao Mengfu had ultimately maintained his loyalty to the Song Dynasty.
Pieter Bruegel the Elder, a northern Renaissance painter living in the sixteenth-century, is famous for his scenic landscapes and allegorical genre paintings. Closer inspection of his art, however, reveals a comical, droll side to the artist. It requires a magnifying glass to observe the details in his work that expose a mischievous humor and a distinct love for the grotesque. Gruesome hybrid creatures, scatological imagery and mockery are scattered throughout his paintings and drawings. Living at a time when laughter was viewed as essential for physical well-being, Bruegel adopted the style of his predecessor Hieronymus Bosch and created a humorous, burlesque style uniquely his own. Although Bruegel's fascination with crude humor challenges stereotypical religious Renaissance themes, his skill at portraying realistic detail must not be overlooked. His subjects and scenes have a certain charm to them – an aura that is often simultaneously threatening and light-hearted. By further understanding the uses of humor in Bruegel's art, I will discuss how both sixteenth century viewers may have interpreted his art, and how we as viewers today may understand it. It is perhaps only in the Renaissance that one can find such a provocative blend of humor and the grotesque, and furthermore, one that resonates all the magnificence of a Bruegel masterpiece.

Joanna G. Myers

Humor and the Grotesque: The Art of Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Fall of the Rebel Angels, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1562, located at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts in Belgium, image from ArtStor.
At the height of opulence in Second Empire France, Napoléon III and Haussmann’s restructuring of Paris called for the construction of a new opera house. Out of a smorgasbord of competitors, the virtually unknown Charles Garnier was selected, presenting a plan that was heralded for its architectural candor and reasoned organization. The plan employed all manner of techniques in order to present its decoration and composition as a veritable litany of formal styles, combining the Neoclassical with the Néobaroque, all with an affinity for the Beaux-Arts. Garnier’s vision implements modern technologies, while also rediscovering classic methods, and utilizes atypical materials to achieve classic ends, ultimately establishing the space as a truly eclectic masterpiece, that, in its opulence, stands as a monument to Second Empire decadence. In his October 5 reaction to the Opéra’s inauguration, Duclain de la Mouzelle writes that the “gay, splendid edifice responds perfectly to the idea that we shall have one day of the Imperial era.” The empire, the building’s construction, and contemporary Paris itself, however, stand at the edge of a precipice, with the age of industrialism promising an end to such unchecked splendor, an end soon manifested in the disappearance of strictly classically inspired architecture and the advent of iron architectural construction that would so consume the Parisian aesthetic. L’Opéra seemingly participates with a dying aesthetic, however, despite its veneer of grandeur, in its construction the building engages in conversation with these developing technologies and ideas, implementing them in ways that bolster traditional ends. In this way, Garnier’s Opéra transcends its clinical opulence, instead notably participating in the social and cultural movement of late nineteenth century France.
Art and Art History Senior Projects

Minah J. Kim
Allyson E. Hitte
Nell M. Erzinger
Sarah W. Parker
Joanna G. Myers
Rachel M. Vockroth
Madison L. Desmond
Alexandra V. McComas
Alisa M. Luongo
Chelsea A. Anspach